

A

Serious Inquiry

Into the Means of an

HAPPY UNION:

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What Reformation is Necessary
to prevent Popery, and to avert God's
Judgments from the Nation.

Written upon the occasion of the FAST,
and humbly offered to the Consideration

OF THE
PARLIAMENT.

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L O N D O N;

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HAPPY UNION

Between the North and South
of the United States

By the Author of the
"FARMER'S ALMANAC"

OF THE
FARMER'S ALMANAC

By WILLIAM SAWYER, D.D.
Author of "The Farmer's Almanac"

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Into the means of an

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CHAP. I.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

YOU having made an Address to His Majesty to proclaim a Publick Fast throughout the whole Nation, all good men ought to hope your intentions are in a Christian way to appease Gods anger that has been kindled against us, and to pursue such Methods as may prevent those heavy Judgments that hang over our heads; and therefore I may presume that you will readily embrace any Proposals that shall be offered you out of Gods Word, to shew the Causes and Remedies of our Distractions.

Two things generally are designed in such Fasts:
1. An Humiliation under the Sins that have been the cause of those Judgments under which we groan.

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2. A Supplication for Direction and Assistance to find out and pursue those means and ways which will prevent the Punishments that God does threaten us withall.

That 'tis Sin that does bring confusion and desolation to a People, is plain by the threatnings and judgments of God, that we read of throughout the Old Testament, where are innumerable instances of Gods severe punishments inflicted upon his own People, for their transgressing of his Commandments; and S. Paul does tell us, 1 Cor. 10. 6. *These things were our examples, so the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. And they are written for our admonition, ver. 11.* That by avoiding the sin we may also escape the punishment. But I need not prove this, since your desiring of a Fast is an acknowledgment of your belief thereof.

The next thing will be to inquire what sins they are for which God does thus shew his indignation against us. Now in reckoning up these sins every Party will follow their own inclinations, and be sure to acquit themselves, and lay all the blame upon their Adversaries. Thus a Papist will say, all these mischiefs come upon us, because we have forsaken the Roman Catholick Church. The Presbyterians and Independents, because by enacting the Observation of Ceremonies, and requiring Declarations and Subscriptions which they will not take, we have silenced so many Godly Ministers, and scandalized other serious Christians. An Anabaptist and a Quaker will say, it comes for persecuting the People of God. Others again will say, and with more reason, that God is angry with our Nation for that general Contempt of his Commandments, whether

whether it be in open profaneness and neglect of all Religion; or else in the licentious profession of an erroneous Faith and Worship; to the great distracting of many sober and well meaning People. That I may rightly state the whole matter, I will reduce the publick sins of the Nation to four heads, which I suppose will contain the chiefest things whereby God is provoked to shew his displeasure against us; these are *Heresie*, *Schism*, *Ignorance*, and *Profaneness*. *Heresie*, in denying one or more necessary Truths of the Gospel; *Schism*, in breaking the Unity of Christs Body; *Ignorance*, in not taking pains to come to the Knowledge of Truth; and *Profaneness*, in acting contrary to their Knowledge and Profession.

C H A P. II.

THat Heresie is a crying sin, that will bring Gods Judgments upon a People where it is publicly allowed, is plain, because it is a sin that God has threatened with damnation. *Gal. 5.20.* amongst other sins Heresies are reckoned, and of them all 'tis said, *They that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* *Titus 3.10.* A man that is an Heretick after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that such a one is subverted and sinneth; being condemned of himself. And *S. Peter* says, *2 Pet. 2.1.* There shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them; and bring upon themselves swift destruction. We are further taught wherein this Heresie doth consist, *2 John ver. 9.* Whosoever transgresseth,

*Heresie and
Schism damnable
sins.*

and

and abides not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. And 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction. So that not onely sinning against the natural light of Conscience, or that Religion and Persuasion that a man is convinced of, but transgressing the known Doctrine of Christ, and disobeying the Gospel, is a damnable sin, and the publick permission thereof will bring destruction to a Nation.

Schism a dam-
nable sin.

Schism, that is another damning sin, and the open allowance of it must bring Judgment upon a Nation. Gal. 5. 20. where the word is rendered *Seditions*, it does as properly signifie *Schisms* also, and then of them 'tis said, *They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Again, Rom. 16. 17. *Mark those which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.* And S. Jude tells us of those that under the Gospel perished in the gainsaying of Core. And that we may know what sort of men they are, he adds ver. 19. *These be they which separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*

Ignorance and
Profaneness
damnable sins.

I need not go about to prove that Ignorance of the Gospel and Profaneness are damning sins, and consequently will bring Gods Judgments upon the Nation. Now all these four sins follow one from another; the first is Heresie or False Persuasion, contrary to the truth of the Gospel; that as it is damnable alone, so it will lead men into Schisms and Divisions, and they will
make

make men negligent and careless, and that will necessarily keep them in ignorance, and make them forget both God and their duty; and then the next step is to Profaneness. So that to keep out Profaneness we must banish Ignorance, and to prevent Ignorance we must quiet Schisms and Distractions, and to silence them we must take away Heresies and False Opinions, by instructing men in sober knowledge of the Truth, and keeping out all Heretical and Schismatical Seducers. The first thing then to be set about in order to appease Gods anger, is to establish sound and true Religion, and prevent the spreading of Heresie and False Doctrine, which will unavoidably bring Schism, Ignorance, and Profaneness. For 'tis a certain truth, that ignorant and profane persons do and will shelter themselves under the pretence of being Dissenters, and the multitude of Divisions does make careless people believe there is no such thing as Religion at all; which is too too evident by the prodigious growth of Atheism and Irreligion, ever since these Divisions have been countenanced in 41, under the colour of being favourable to Tender Consciences, and indulging to the weakness of Sober Protestants.

C H A P. III.

Heresie and Schism being in themselves crying sins, and the causes of Ignorance and Profaneness, we must see in the next place upon whom the charge of these Crimes must be laid, that so we may find out the true means to redress them.

Anabaptists
and Quakers
Hereicks.

John 3.5.

And first because the word *Protestant* is so much used in the style of our times, I will begin with the sense of the Protestant Churches abroad, concerning some Heresies that are preached, and openly maintained by many that are now called Sober Protestants. And first I will begin with Baptism, which is wholly laid aside by the Quakers, and denied to all Infants as unnecessary by the Anabaptists, contrary to the expresse Word of God, that says, *Except any one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*; that is, either *re. or voto*, when ordinary means are not to be had. Hence the *Augustan* Confession, of greatest account and most generally received in Protestant Churches beyond the Seas, says *cap. 9. Of Baptism they teach, that it is necessary to Salvation as a Ceremony instituted by Christ: and that the grace of God is offered by Baptism: and that Infants are to be baptized: and that Infants commended to God by Baptism are received into the favour of God, and are made the Children of God, as Christ does witness. They do condemn the Anabaptists that reject Baptism of Infants, and that do affirm that Infants may be saved without Baptism, and out of the Church.*

The French Confession, Art. 35. *We acknowledge two Sacraments onely common to the whole Church, of which the first is Baptism, given us to testifie our Adoption, because*
T A N O by

by it we are engrafted into the Body of Christ, that being washed by his Blood, we may also be renewed unto holiness of life by his Spirit. Besides, though Baptism be a Sacrament of faith and repentance, nevertheless since God does receive into his Church parents with their posterity, we affirm that Infants that are born of holy parents are to be baptized by the authority of Christ. Acts 22.16 Rom.6.3. Matth.3.11. Mark 16.16. Matth.19.

The Dutch Confession, Art.34. We believe that every man that desires to attain eternal life, ought to be baptized with the one Baptism, that is, once onely. Neither doth this Baptism profit onely in that moment when the water remains upon us, but throughout the whole time of our life. Therefore we detest here the error of the Anabaptists, who are not content with one onely Baptism once received, but also condemn the Baptism of Infants that are born of faithful parents.

The Saxon Confession, Art.14. The Son of God sitting at the right hand of his everlasting Father is so efficacious in him, as S. Paul saith to the Galatians, As many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. And he affirms the Holy Ghost is given in Baptism, when he saith in Titus, By the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. And in John'tis said, Except any one be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven. We teach therefore that Baptism is necessary, and we baptize none but once onely. We retain the Baptism of Infants, because it is certain the promise of grace does also pertain unto Infants, and to them onely who are engrafted into the Church.

Now we have seen what is the sense of the Protestant Churches concerning these Anabaptists and Quakers, that either wholly set aside Baptism as useless,

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or

or not necessary or at all belonging to Infants; let us inquire what was the Opinion of the Ancient and Catholick Church in this matter. That the practice of baptizing Infants was universal throughout all Ages of the Church, is clear from *Tertullian*, *S. Cyprian*, and *Origen*, and all the Fathers in the following Ages. And when *Pelagius* denied the Doctrine of Original Sin, and the Necessity of Supernatural Grace, in that sense which the Church had always received it, he did also deny the Necessity of Baptism for Infants; which opposition of his to the Catholick Truth caused several Councils to condemn his Heresies, and was the occasion of *S. Jeroms* and *S. Augustines*, and many other ancient Fathers Writings, about this subject.

Hence we have the Decree of the Council *Milevis* confirmed in the 77th. Canon of the *African Codex*; *It pleaseth us, that whosoever he be that doth deny that little Children, that are newly born from their Mothers womb, ought to be baptized; or saith, that they are baptized for the remission of sins, but that they derive nothing of original sin from Adam, that ought to be cleansed by the laver of regeneration. From whence it does follow, That the Form of Baptism for the remission of sins is not understood to be true. but false and feigned, let him be an Anathema: because that cannot be understood which was spoken by the Apostle, [By one man sin came into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all forasmuch as all have sinned;] unless in that manner that it has been understood by the Catholick Church every where spread abroad throughout the world. And because of this rule of faith even Infants, who could commit no sins in their own persons, are truly baptized for the remission of sins, that that may be cleansed through regeneration, which they derived from their first generation.*

After-

vide epist. Celest. ad Episc. Gall.

Afterwards, the Acts that were past in condemnation of this Doctrine of *Pelagius* were sent to the third General Council held at *Ephesus*, and there confirmed by the universal Church, Act 5. *The Commentaries of* Relatio Conc. Eph. gen. 3. ad Celest. a. 5. *the things that were decreed and constituted by your Piety, in the deposition of the wicked Pelagians and Celestians, of Celestius, Pelagius, Julianus, Persulius, Florus, Marcellinus Orentius, and of those that are of the same opinion with them, being read in the Synod, we have also judged that they ought to remain firm and valid, and we decree the same thing with you, and account them deposed. And that you may be more certain of this, we have sent you the Commentaries, and the Subscriptions of the Synod.*

It were easie to prove the same more largely throughout the Christian Church in all Ages ever since; so that the Quakers and Anabaptists being Hereticks by the Word of God, as it has been generally understood by Protestant Churches, and the Church Universal before their time, if they be openly tolerated to profess and propagate their Heresie, it must needs bring down Gods Judgments upon our Nation.

CHAP. IV.

NOW for Schism, that is a sin of that magnitude Papists, Presbyterians, and Independents Schismaticks, Numb. 16. and heinous nature, that God did open the earth and swallow up men alive for it, and sent a miraculous Fire to consume the first Beginners of Schismatical Worship. And of the *Samaritans* that worshipped God in Schism our Lord says, *Ye know not what ye worship.* Now John 4.22. this Schism was in opposing the lawful Officers which

God had appointed to minifter about holy things, and venturing upon the Sacred Function without any orderly warrant to do it,

And 'tis as plain a case that Christ has appointed Officers and Governours in his Church, and committed all the World to their Government in their respective Capacities, in things relating to his Worship. *John 20. As my Father sent me,* (that is, to appoint Officers, and with Authority to rule and govern my Church all over the World) *so send I you,* (not Peter onely) to do the like. Again, *Matth. 28. Go make disciples in all nations; — and lo I am with you to the end of the world.* Further, *Mark 16. 15. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* So all the World were bound by the command of our Saviour to receive the Apostles, and such as they sent to preach the Gospel, (for they could not speak to all men personally) and be ruled by them according to the Gospel, or else they were to be damned. These Apostles gave in charge also to the Bishops and Pastors, to rule and govern the Church *originals, Acts 20. 28. Over which the Holy Ghost had made them Bishops.* They are to *exhort and rebuke with all authority; let no man despise them, Titus 2. 15.* They are to receive Accusations and examine Witnesses, *1 Tim. 5. 19.* and therefore must have a Summoner to cite the Offender, and a Register to write down the Informations and Depositions. They are to *rebuke before all, that others may fear, 1 Tim. 5. 20.* The People are commanded likewise to *obey them that have the rule over them, and to submit themselves, for they watch for their souls, as they that must give account, Heb. 13. 17.* They are to know them that labour among them,

and

and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them; and to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake; not for their Birth, or Parts, or natural Accomplishments, but as Ministers of Christ for their works sake, 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13. They are in case of offence given to receive them with fear and trembling, 2 Cor. 7. 15. And lest any should despise this Authority which our Lord has given, he has said, Matth. 18. 18. *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.* And John 20. 23. *Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

Here is abundantly enough to demonstrate, that Christ has appointed Governours in his Church, and commanded all men to obey them. And therefore to despise their Office, to condemn their Authority, and withdraw from their Communion, and to invade their Charges, is a crying sin that will bring Gods Judgment upon a Nation.

But the Question is still, Who are the Governours that must be thus obeyed, and who are to send and appoint them? Now 'tis plain that this Authority is from Christ, and where he gave it he gave the Holy Ghost also with it; John 20. *Receive the Holy Ghost.* And 'tis plain, the Apostles having received the Holy Ghost, did convey it to other Pastors, who were ordained by them; Acts 20. *Govern the Church over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Bishops.* And when Ananias told a Lie to S. Peter, he says, *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie against the Holy Ghost?* So that those that derive Authority in an orderly way by Succession, from those who have power given them to give the Holy

Luther tom. 2. ep. fol. 41. *Tu ex mea parte explores, an vocacionem suam possint probare. Neque enim Deus unquam aliquem misit, nisi vel per hominem vocatum, vel per signa declaratum, ne ipsum quidem filium.*

Holy Ghost for the work of a Bishop, those are such Governours to whom we must yield obedience; and in opposing of them we shall oppose Christ. If any pretend to this Authority, and cannot shew they had it from them who were enabled to bestow the Holy Ghost, they must shew miracles to prove it. For 'tis not Knowledge alone, or the Choice of the People, or the Appointment of the Magistrate, that can give the Holy Ghost, that must come from Christ, or some of those that received that power by Succession from him. And this is the Opinion of all Protestant Churches in their Confessions, (when it may be had) and has been the constant Tradition of the whole Church, and all the Catholick Writers in all Ages.

The *Augustane* Confession, Art. 14. *Concerning the Ecclesiastical Order we teach, that none ought publicly to teach or administer the Sacraments, unless he be rightly called, as Paul does give in charge to Titus, that he should appoint Elders in every City.*

The *French* Confession, Art. 21. *We believe that the true Church of Christ ought to be governed by that Polity or Discipline which our Lord Jesus Christ established, that there should be in it Pastors, Presbyters or Elders, and Deacons.* Art. 31. *We believe it is not lawful for any one to invade the government of the Church by his own Authority. We believe that this rule ought to be followed, that all Pastors, Elders, and Deacons, ought to have a testimony of their calling, Matth. 28. 10, 16. Mark 16. 15. John 15. 16. Acts 1. 21. Rom. 10. 15. Tit. 1. 5. Gal. 1. 15. 1 Tim. 3. 7, 8.* Art. 32. *We believe that those that are chosen Governours of any Church, should take care amongst themselves, how the whole body may be most conveniently governed; yet so as they*

they do not depart in any thing from the Institution of our Lord Jesus Christ. But this does not hinder, but that there may be a peculiar Institution in all places as shall seem most convenient, Acts 14. 23, 15. & 25. 28. 1 Cor. 14. 40. 1 Pet. 5.

The Dutch Confession, Art. 31. We believe that Ministers, Elders, and Deacons, ought to be called to their Functions, and promoted by the lawful election of the Church, with serious prayer to God for that purpose; and in that order and manner which is prescribed in the Word of God.

The Bohemian Confession, Art. 19. They teach that the Ministers of the Church, to whom the Administration of the Word and Sacraments is committed, ought to be rightly instituted according to the Prescription given by our Lord and his Apostles. — Wherefore prayer being made by the Elders, let them be confirmed in the Congregation to this work by the laying on of hands. And they refer to Heb. 5. to S. Paul's Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and then say, Wherefore no man is permitted to exercise the Office of a Priest amongst us, but he that is called and instituted according to these precepts, as it is meet.

The Canons of the Dutch Church speak more fully in this matter, Can. 5. It pleaseth that exact account should be taken in Provincial Synods, and that such order should be appointed for the good of the Church, as necessity doth require. Can. 6. It shall be lawful for none to exercise the Ministry in private places or Hospitals, or any other place whatsoever, unless he be admitted according to the foregoing Canons, and he shall be subject to the Laws of the Church as well as any others.

The French Canons say the same of Ministers, Can. La discipline des-
24. Ministers shall not wander up and down, neither shall they have liberty to thrust themselves in by their own autho-
Eglise, &c. par
Huisseau.

rity

city where they please. Can. 26. A Minister that shall thrust himself into a place, although he be approved by the people, cannot be approved by the neighbour Ministers, or others; but shall be brought to the cognisance of the Colloquy or Synod of the Province. Can. 57. Those that shall thrust themselves into the Ministry, in Provinces and places where the pure Ministry is already established, shall be sufficiently admonished to desist; and in case they shall persevere, they shall be declared Schismatics, as also they that follow them, if they do not forsake them, after they have been admonished of the same.

The Assembly of Divines in their Confession of Faith, Chap. 30. The Lord Jesus as King and Head of his Church hath appointed a Government in the hand of Church-officers, distinct from the Civil Magistrate. Chap. 31. For the better Government and further Edification of the Church, there ought to be such Assemblies as are commonly called Synods or Councils. — It belongeth to Synods and Councils ministerially to determine Controversies of Faith and Cases of Conscience, to set down Rules and Directions for better ordering of the publick Worship of God, and Government of his Church, to receive Complaints in cases of male Administration, and authoritatively to determine the same; that is, by silencing those that will not conform to them.

Codex Can.
Eccles. univers. al.

Let us see what Order the Universal Church made in these matters, Can. 4. which is the renowned Decree of the first General Council held at Nice: A Bishop ought to be appointed by all the Bishops that are in the Province; but if this be difficult by reason of some urgent necessity, or because of the length of the way, the Ordination ought to be made by three at least gathered together, and the rest that are absent approving what is done, and giving their

their consents by their Letters. And the Confirmation of all that is done in every Province must be by the Metropolitan. Can. 5. of the same Council; If any man be excommunicated, whether he be a Clergyman or a Layman, let this Sentence be observed by the Bishops in every Province, according to the Canon, which does require, that those that are rejected by one should not be received by another.

And so they that have manifestly offended the Bishop, shall be held justly excommunicated, till it shall seem good to the Company of Bishops to decree a gentler Sentence. Can. 83. If any Bishop that is deposed by a Synod, or any Presbyter or Deacon that is deposed by his Bishop, shall offer to exercise any thing of his Ministry, whether he be a Bishop, according to the custom going before, or a Priest, or a Deacon, he shall not have any hopes of being restored in a Synod, nor be permitted to make any Apologie for himself. And let all that joyn in Communion with him also be cast out, especially if they shall joyn with him after they know this Sentence is pronounced against him.

Can. 84. If any Presbyter or Deacon shall despise his own Bishop, and separate himself from the Church, and hold a Congregation, and set up an Altar, and will not hearken to his Bishop when he calls him, nor obey nor submit to him when he calls him once and twice, let him be wholly deposed, and that without remedy, and with utter incapacity of receiving his Honour again; but if he persist to make disturbance, and raise Schisms in the Church, let him be restrained as a seditious person by the Secular Powers. Can. 91. If any Presbyter or Deacon deposed by his own Bishop, or any Bishop deposed by a Synod, shall offer to trouble the Emperours ears, since he ought to apply himself to a greater Synod, and refer the right which he thinks he has to more Bishops, and wait for their examination and judgment. *But*

if he shall despise them and trouble the King, he shall not be thought worthy of any pardon; nor have any place of refuge, or hopes of restitution.

Can. 165. made at the second General Council held at Constantinople; It is manifest that it appertains to the Synod of every Province, to order all matters within their Province, according as it is defined in the Council of Nice.

So that as the Law of Nature does require that there should be an orderly way in all Societies, to determine all matters relating to the Government thereof; So Christ has appointed in his Church, that all the People should obey their several Pastors; and because they are men like others, and die, he has appointed a way how their Offices should be supplied to the end of the World; and for the more peaceable ordering of that matter has said, *If any one refuse to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.* And by his Apostle, *The spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets.* And according to these Rules not only the ancient and universal Church in all Ages, but even the Reformed Protestant Churches, to prevent Schisms and Confusions, have constantly decreed, that no man ought to exercise any Ecclesiastical Office in the Church, but with the allowance of each Provincial Synod, or according to such Laws and Canons as they did prescribe. And therefore all the Independents, Anabaptists, Quakers, that have no other outward Mission but the Choice of the People, and yet pretend to be Teachers and Governors of the Church, do like Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, that presumed to burn incense without Gods warrant; and that Nation may expect Gods judgments, that does permit such Perversenation

Matth. 18.

1 Cor. 14. 32.

Independents,
Anabaptists,
Quakers, guilty
of Schism.

nation of his Holy Name and Worship, and not take effectual care to hinder such a notorious violation of the Priestly Office.

But yet among those that maintain the necessity of an outward and orderly Mission, there are still great Disputes about the lawful Authority of those Ecclesiastical Governours that charge men with Schism for denying Obedience, and separating themselves from their Communion. Christ therefore having appointed Governours in his Church, must also have left some peaceable way for ordaining and settling of every man in his Place and Office, so as to prevent Schisms and Confusions. And to that end the Apostle tells us, *The first of the Prophets* (much more them of the Bishops, &c.) *are subject to the Prophets*; and our Lord has further said, *If any man refuse to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.* According to these Rules of the Scripture the Christian Church in all Ages did require, that Bishops and Pastors should be ordained by Provincial Synods of lawful Bishops, or else according to such Canons and Orders as were constituted in Provincial and Universal Councils of Bishops. And this was the constant standing Law of the Church for fifteen hundred years together, and in quiet times, it was constantly observed, either by open consent or tacit approbation. But upon the Reformation the Ancient and Apostolical Order of Episcopacy was not observed in some places, but mere Presbyters did take up on them to ordain other Presbyters, yet desiring the restitution of the ancient Order of Bishops if it might be, and still maintaining that the ordaining Presbyters, and settling of all Affairs of the Church, ought to be done by the mutual consent and appointment of

1 Cor. 14. 32.

Matt. 18.

the Ecclesiastical Governours, in their several Charges and Assemblies, as is largely to be seen by the Harmony of Confessions, and in several Canons that have been made by Reformed Churches about this matter. In pursuance of this Order of Christ, and the Canons and Practice of the whole Church ancient and modern, Protestant Greek and Roman, our Bishops and Clergy here in *England* are legally and rightly ordained and settled in their several Charges; and therefore to disobey them, and separate from their Communion, or to presume publicly to exercise the Ministerial Office against their command, is Schismatical, and contrary to the Order of Christ, and the whole Church of God. And all Popish Priests or Presbyterian Ministers, or whosoever they are that hold any Meetings and Congregations besides the lawful Ministers, and without their allowance, are formal Schismatics, and so are all their Disciples and Communicants. So that if there be any such thing as Government in the Church, and any such sin as Schism, as I have shewed there are, the allowing men publicly to affront Gods Ministers by Schismatical Congregations, and to live in open contempt of their Authority, must needs bring great guilt and heavy Judgments upon the Nation.

But against this it will be urged by the Papists, that our Bishops are no lawful Bishops, and our Clergy no lawful Ministers of Christ, because they are not confirmed and authorized by the Pope.

*Papists guilty
of Schism.*

To which I answer, When they shall shew any Law or Tradition of the Universal Church, to make it necessary for the Pope to confirm our Bishops, then I will allow the Objection to be of moment; but 'tis so far from that, that the Laws of the whole Church, and of many

many ancient Popes, do forbid the Pope to meddle with Ordinations in other Provinces, and expressly say, that all Ordinations of Bishops ought to be by the Metropolitans, and Bishops of each respective Province amongst themselves. And so long as there is a peaceable agreement amongst all our Bishops and Clergy concerning this matter, that is a sufficient reason to free us, and charge all Popish Priests here in England, and all their Adherents, with the guilt of Schism, and to make it appear that they do act contrary to the Law and Tradition of the whole Church of Christ.

Conc. Nic.
can. 4. Cunct.
Ant. can. 9.
Frid. Dist. 64.

The Presbyterians and Independents also, that had formerly Episcopal Ordination, or else Imposition of Hands from Presbyters, which they esteem sufficient Holy Orders, are guilty of Schism, if they keep Conventicles, or withdraw themselves and others from the Obedience and Communion of the respective Bishops and Ministers of this Nation. For the Bishops and Clergy being rightly constituted, and peaceably settled in their several Charges, according to the order of Christ, by undoubted Succession from the Apostles, and according to the Canons and Tradition of the whole Church, and even after that manner by order of Provincial Synods, which all Reformed Churches do practise and allow, they have Authority from the Holy Ghost, and do rule the Church over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers; and all in their Charges must obey them that have the rule over them, and submit themselves unto them, Heb. 13. 17. Unless therefore they can prove, that the whole Church in all Ages was fundamentally mistaken in this matter, and that our Bishops and Ministers are no legal Pastors of Christs Flock, they in disobeying them do disobey Christ and the whole Church, and

Presbyterians
and Independents
guilty of
Schism.

are

Mark, 16. are to be accounted as *Heathens and Publicans*. And then if our Land should publicly permit, or not to about to take away such publick Offences, we may expect that God should pour down his indignation upon us as he did upon the Heathen, when we countenance those that make themselves as Heathens amongst us. *Matth. 18. 17.*

CHAP. IV.

Objections of Dissenters answered.

objct.

ALL that they can say in this matter is, That the Bishops and Clergy of *England* are lawful Church-governours over those that choose and receive them, but over none else; and they having never chosen them for their Teachers and Governours, they are not so to them, and therefore they are no Schismatics in withdrawing from their Communion, and choosing other Governours for themselves.

Ans.

People have no right to choose their Ministers.

It is true, 'tis required that a Clergyman should be of good behaviour, and have a good report of them which are without, *1 Tim. 3. 2, 7.* And consequently all Christians have a right to except against ill manners; but I never find that Christ or his Apostles in their practice, or that any Word of God does allow, that the People should have any thing to do in choosing their Bishops and Ministers, much less had a Negative to reject whom they please. Indeed the Churches in former Ages have been moved with the nomination and earnest instances of Kings and Princes; and by the

recommendation and petition of the People, to ordain such men Bishops and Priests as they did desire, if they found them worthy; but 'tis by no Example or Tradition from Christ or his Apostles, and they found so many inconveniences by it, that the Universal Church did forbid it, *Council. Trid. can. 23.* reckoned among the Canons of the Universal Church; *It ought not to be permitted to the people to have the election of those that are to be appointed to the sacred Ministry.* And therefore where Ministers are peaceably settled according to the publick Order of the Church, the pretence of the Peoples Negative cannot free men from obedience, or excuse their Schism in departing from them.

But secondly, all that right the People can pretend to is transferred to their Representatives in Parliament, who have in their Laws confirmed all the Bishops and Clergy now in possession by their Authority, and so they are sealed by the Peoples consent likewise, and therefore in all respects whatsoever our Clergy are undoubted Ministers of Christ, and all within their charge must own them for such, and submit to their Authority.

But the Parliament may alter these Laws, and give the People a Negative.

I will not dispute what they may or may not do in this matter, they having formerly made Laws to confirm those Ministers that are already, they have undoubted right from the Peoples consent likewise, if that does avail any thing; and therefore as long as those Ministers live in the Orthodox Profession of true Religion, they will be Schismatics that disobey them.

That

That there is an open flagrant Schism is plain, and the guilt of this must lie somewhere; it cannot possibly be charged upon the Bishops and Clergy, and the Church of *England*, for they go on upon the same Rules and Methods that they did before 41, when there were few of these Nonconformists and separate Congregations, and according to the order of the whole Christian Church; therefore the Crime must wholly lie upon those who run away from their own Ministers, and heap to themselves Teachers and Disciples, contrary to the Command of Christ and the Law of his Church.

But they will say, They are not the Schismatics, but the Bishops and Clergy, by imposing unlawful Ceremonies which they cannot submit to, as the use of the Surplice, and an Aerial Cross, and therefore must keep Conventicles of their own.

Suppose the Church was mistaken in the imposing these Ceremonies, what Authority can they have to keep Conventicles? Since they are but private men, a private Worship in their own Families is all that they can pretend to exercise; but that can be no Warrant for them to assemble in publick Congregations, and seduce others from their obedience to their lawful Teachers.

As for the Ceremonies, they are no other than the whole Church of God in the purer times did observe and practise.

Of the Surplice For the Surplice *S. Jerom* upon *Ezek. 42.* says, *The Divine Religion hath one habit in the Ministry, and another in common use and conversation.* And against the *Pelagians, lib. 1. c. 9.* *What offence, I ask, is it against God if I wear a more pure garment? If the Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon, and the rest of the Ecclesiastical Order, do*

go with a white garment when they administer about holy things? Take heed, O ye Clergy; take heed, O ye that are devoted to an holy life: ye Widows and Virgins, you are in danger, (from these Pelagian Hereticks) unless the common people do behold you in sordid and in ragged Woollen Apparel. So that they were the Pelagian Hereticks that quarrell'd against the use of the Surplice of old, for which S. Jerom does deride their folly and madness.

Concil. 4. Carthag. c. 41. It is decreed that A Deacon in the time of his oblation or reading onely should wear a white garment. From whence we may very well conclude, that Bishops and Priests likewise had a peculiar Habit in their sacred Administrations.

Theodoret in his History, lib. 2. c. 23. does make mention of an holy Garment given by Constantine to Macarius the Bishop, when he adorned the Church of Jerusalem, that he should wear it at the time of the Administration of holy Baptism. And that this holy Garment being afterwards worn by a Stage-player, as he was dancing in it he fell down and died. Which instances do further prove there were used distinctive Habits in the Primitive Church in the time of the sacred Administration.

And for the use of the sign of the Cross Antiquity is much more full, that one would wonder how men can neglect, much less blame a thing, which the godly Martyrs and ancient Fathers did so much use and glory in.

Of the sign of the Cross.

Tertull. de Coron. Mil. c. 3. At every progress and motion, &c. we sign our foreheads with the sign of the Cross.

S. Cyprian ep. 53. Let the forehead be fortified, that the sign of God may be kept secure.

S. Jerom upon Ezech. 10. In the ancient Hebrew Letters, which the Samaritans use at this day, the letter *Teth* is of the figure of a Cross, which is made in the forehead of Christians, and often signed with the hand.

S. August. tract. 11. in Joan. If we say to a Catechumen, Do you believe in Christ? He answers, I believe, and signs himself with the Cross of Christ. He carries it in his forehead, and is not ashamed of the Cross of Christ. And in 118. Unless the sign of the Cross be applied, whether it be to the foreheads of the Believers, or to the water by which they are regenerated, or to the Sacrifice, (viz. in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper) by which they are nourished, none of them is rightly performed.

S. Chrysost. Hom. 34. in Matth. All things amongst us are performed with the sign of the Cross. If any be to be regenerated, that is baptized, the Cross is used; if he be to be nourished with mystical food, if he be to be confirmed, and whatever else, everywhere the symbol of our victory is at hand. And for this cause we make the sign of it with a great deal of care upon our houses, and upon our walls, and upon our doors, upon our foreheads, and upon our minds.

It were easie to bring many more instances of the primitive usage of the Cross, but these are sufficient. But I will add some few Histories to shew, how God himself did miraculously from Heaven encourage the Christians in the use thereof. And the first shall be that renowned representation of the Cross in the Heavens made to Constantine before his Army, with this Inscription joyned to it, *By this overcome*; at which the Emperour and the whole Army were astonished, and wondered what it should mean. But while he doubted and reasoned in his mind about it, he fell asleep, and in his dream Christ seemed to appear to him

vide Euseb. in
vita Const. l. 1.
Socr. l. 1. c. 1.

him with the sign that was seen in the Heavens, and commanded him to make a representation of the sign that appeared to him, and to use it as a defence against the Conflicts of his Adversaries; which when he awoke he declared to his Friends, and caused Crosses to be made of Gold and precious stones.

Gregory Nazianzen tells another remarkable story of a miraculous appearing of a Cross in the Heavens, in the days of Julian the Apostate, who encouraged the Jews to rebuild their Temple at Jerusalem again, which they did set about with all cost and diligence, the very Women labouring amidst the Dirt and Mortar. But there came an Earthquake and violent Storm, and Fire proceeded out of the Temple and consumed some of them. *Neither let any disbelieve this, but such a one who may shrink upon the same reason to disbelieve other miracles of God. But what is yet more wonderful and illustrious, there stood a light in the heavens describing the figure of a Cross. And that figure and name which was before despised by wicked men in the earth, is now equally manifested unto all in heaven, and is made a trophy of Gods victory over the wicked, higher than all trophies—* These were the signs in heaven and in earth; but did not the air give forth tokens, and was not that sanctified with the signs of Christs passion? Let them which were the spectators, and privy to these miracles, bring forth their garments marked with the sign of the Cross. For as soon as any of ours, or any strangers did relate these things, or hear them related, presently he saw this miracle on himself or him that stood by him, that he himself had the figure of a Star upon him, or else he beheld it in the garments of another, exceeding the art of all Womens work, or most elaborate Embroidery. Which thing did so much amaze all the Beholders, that they all as it were with

Greg. Naz.
orat. 2. adv.
Jul.

quodam modo
signum erat

one voice at this sign did call upon the God of the Christians; and did endeavour with many praises and prayers to appease his anger. And many making no longer delay, went presently to the Priests at the same time that this thing happened, and did use much supplication to be admitted into the Church, and to be made partakers of the more perfect dispensations, and were sanctified by holy Baptism. Socrates in his 3d. Book and 20th. Chapter does mention this same story; and Melancthon a sober Protestant Writer does put it into his *Chronicon*.

Scultet. Annal.
p. 18. A. D.
1517.

Scultetus a grave Protestant Writer relates another Apparition of the Cross in the Heavens, Anno 1517. Frederick Elector of Saxony, and John his brother, going to prayers on the Eve of the Nativity of our Lord with a great Attendance, see above the Tower in a serene Sky a shining purple Cross, very great, and described with a clear Figure. The Spectators stand awhile amazed at the sight.

Now if God Almighty had been offended with the use of the Cross, it cannot be thought he would have made such miraculous representations thereof in the Heavens, which must needs encourage the primitive Christians in that custom. Neither if there had been none of these representations, can we think a thing so universally used in the purer Ages of the Church, should be superstitious. For certainly some of those holy Martyrs would have discovered the Error, and found out some means to have taken it away. And therefore the use of the Cross can be no sufficient ground to separate from the Church of England.

*See the peace-
able design.*

But the People think we can pray better and preach better than the Conformists do, and find they edify more under our instruction than by their own Ministers, and therefore we may lawfully preach, and they lawfully hear us.

But

But the Apostle says, *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves*; but he does not say, Gad up and down, and hear and obey the best. So that if you should teach them better, yet Edification does not consist onely in Knowledge, but in Obedience also; and if you do instruct them in sound knowledge, you must tell them they ought to hear their own Ministers, and obey them and leave you; and therefore you must leave off to preach also. But what endless confusion must this bring into the world, if Children should refuse to be instituted and yield obedience to their Parents, Servants to their Masters, every conceited man to his respective Teachers and Governours, because he fancies another man will teach and rule him better? And yet there will be as much reason for one as another; neither is there the least colour for you to say, or the People to pretend, that your Prayers and Preaching are more for edification, but the quite contrary, both for the Matter and Method.

1. For the Matter, all the substantial Truths in the opinion of all Churches, that are necessary to be known in order to Salvation, are taught in our Congregations, and repeated, and some parts of them expounded upon every Lords Day; so that both old and young have their whole duty frequently resounding in their ears. And our prayers are such which they must needs confels are agreeable to Gods will, and therefore if devoutly offered up will certainly find acceptance at the Throne of Grace.

2. And then for the Method, the very Order of our Service, and the Returns of the Fasts and great Festivals are a perpetual Catechism, and a constant motive to excite and quicken sober Piety and true Devotion.

Where-

Whereas in the way of their teaching 'tis wholly left to the discretion of each Minister to teach what he will, and pray how he will; and what he does preach, and what he has prayed, neither he himself can tell, nor any of the people unless they could all write Short Hand, or had a Revelation from Heaven to inform them; neither can they be sure in such an *ex tempore* way, whether the Doctrine be sound which he does teach, or the Prayers such as are fit to be offered up unto God. Or suppose the Prayers and Preaching should be according to Gods Word, yet may not the Minister easily through ignorance or forgetfulness neglect to instruct the Congregation in many duties, and to offer up many prayers which are necessary to be done? What pretence then can there be for greater edification? The sober Instruction that has been considered and well approved of by the able men of the Nation, must certainly with judicious persons be thought more tending to edification, than the *extempore* and private Conceptions of any single man, and very often of young Students in Divinity. Their passionate Exclamations, loud Noises, and affected Tones and Gestures, may stir up mens Fancies, and make them Enthusiastical; but the sober instruction and catechising, and the well meditated prayers of the Church of England, must make more knowing and serious Christians.

But how it comes about they cannot tell, yet they find they are more edified and better satisfied with the Nonconformists Preaching. As for their being satisfied, that is no more than a *Jew* or a *Turk*, or any Heretick will say, who do deceive their own Souls. And for their edification, that will be as groundless when it

is look'd into, for they will be found defective in their Knowledge, and short in their Obedience to the Gospel; so that it will appear to be nothing but a deluded Fancy and blind Zeal, which is much greater in Quakers and known Enthusiasts, and not the Fruit of the Spirit, which is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance. True Edification does consist in Love of God and our Neighbour, Humility, Mortification, and Self-denial; and therefore the exercise of Fasting, solemnly commemorating and meditating upon the blessed Examples of the Martyrs, casting off all Pride, Self-love, and overweening their own Understandings; following the instruction, piety, and holy conversation of the primitive Fathers and Confessors, must needs be more effectual means to Edification, than the *ex tempore* and new-fangled Devices of modern Schismatics, that set at naught the Wisdom of all former Ages. Certainly they must wilfully shut their eyes, that cannot discover the vanity of such wild pretences of Edification; as if the Church of God in all Ages were not better able to judge than these private men who oppose her Practices, as I plainly have demonstrated.

The last excuse they generally make is, That they are Ministers of Christ, and therefore necessity is laid upon them, and *Wo be unto them if they preach not the Gospel.*

Well, be it so; but they must not be *1 Pet. 4. 13.* Busy Bodies and Bishops in another mans Charge. If they think there is such a Duty lying upon them, they must go to some vacant places, and they will find enough amongst the *Indies*; but there is no reason that they should steal away other mens Flocks, and draw people

people from the obedience of their lawful Governours. Besides, being once Ministers is not a reason sufficient that they must always be allowed to exercise their Office; for there are some whose mouths must be stopped, *Tit. 1. 11.* and 'tis not for persons that are censured to be Judges in their own case; there would be no peace in the world if a legal Sentence should not take place, because the party condemned shall say the judgment is unjust. So that all the Pleas they can make in their own defence do rather aggravate than excuse their Schism.

CHAP. VI.

Of Ignorance.

THE next publick reigning sin, that will bring Judgment upon our Nation, is Ignorance; which is a great scandal where there are so great means for to get knowledge, and so many men able and willing to instruct the ignorant and misguided Christians.

I will not say but that many through carelessness may be wanting to themselves; and perhaps the Teachers in some places have not been so industrious as they might have been; but the great cause of this Ignorance is owing to our Schisms and Distractions; for the Ministers have been employed in driving away Wolves, while they should feed the Lambs; and to strive with the obstinate and perverse, while they should be catechising the weak and ignorant. And as the Ministers have been hindered in instructing by these
Di-

Divisions, so the people have taken occasion to run away, and refuse to hear their sober information; and no wonder then if they continue in ignorance, and others will grow up after them still in the like want of knowledge and unbelief, and so will be indifferent to Popery, or any thing that is most for their advantage.

Now to suffer men to go on in this ignorance, without taking effectual care to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, must necessarily provoke Gods displeasure against our Nation; neither can any remedy be found, but requiring the people both old and young diligently to attend the Publick Worship of God, and and Exposition of the Catechism and Principles of Religion, and strictly enjoyning the Ministers to examine and instruct young Children in the same, whereby the old people also will by degrees come to understand their duty. And how can this ever be brought to pass, but by taking away Conventicles, and compelling all Parents and Masters to send their Children and Servants to the Parish Churches? And because some Parishes are so large and populous, that all the people can never receive instruction or serve God in one Church, care ought to be taken to divide such Parishes, or to erect Chapels of Ease, that all Christians may have room and opportunity to attend the Service of God without distraction. But while many are favoured and winked at under the notion of having Tender Consciences, and being sober Protestants, and that they serve God in Conventicles, others that are lazy and careless will wholly neglect all kind of Religion, or thought about it. And as for those that go to Conventicles for better instruction, they are so far from

finding it there, that most of the great Zealots are ignorant of the common Principles of Christianity, and many of them are taught to deny weighty Truths, and to neglect and despise necessary Duties. Unless therefore some more effectual care be taken to bring men to the knowledge of the Saving Truth, we must expect Gods heavy vengeance on our Nation.

CHAP. VII.

Of Profaneness.

AND now I come to the last publick sin of the Nation, *viz.* open Profaneness, and against which our Hereticks and Schismatics do much cry out, but yet have been the great means to breed and uphold it. This is an Epidemical Distemper, that has infected all sorts of men, as well knowing as ignorant, Orthodox as Schismatical. When and how it sprung up is easie for considering men to find out. All the days of Queen *Elizabeth*, and onward till 41, it was a Pestilence that walked in darkness, and seldom durst peep out to see the Sun; but ever since the Bonds of Restraint have been let loose, and the Laws taken away or relaxed in favour of Tender Consciences, as was pretended, Atheism and Profaneness have come in like a flood upon us, and will certainly continue and increase till Conventicles be suppressed, and men compelled to hear sober instruction, and frequent the Publick Worship of God. For there is a natural self-love in the best of men, which will encline them to ease and

and pleasure, and that meeting with no check without, and having all the Incentives from the Devil within, will unavoidably blind the Understanding, and lead the Will captive to all wickedness, unless the efficacy of Gods Grace does strongly incline and assist them to overcome such Motions. But such effectual Grace is not to be found but in the Church, and in the use of such means as the Gospel does direct us unto.

These are not in Conventicles, or in Taverns, or at home by the Fire side in Private Houses, at the time of Gods Publick Worship; but in the Unity and Communion of the Church. *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,* says Christ, *Matth. 18. 20.* But that is according to his will and command, and not in Schism and Disobedience to their lawful Governours and Instructors.

Gods Grace alone upon many tempers without punishment will not work a Reformation, much less punishments alone without the assistance of Gods Grace; therefore God has appointed both, and authorized Men to be instruments to apply them. The Ministers have power to dispense the Word and Sacraments, and with them the Graces of God, to those that devoutly receive them; but they cannot compell any to attend upon the means. The Magistrates they can compell men to attend upon the means, but they cannot dispense the Graces of Gods Spirit; therefore both must concur, and all little enough to cure the Profaneness of the Age. What influence punishment has we may learn from Gods Word, *Prov. 23. 13. Withhold not correction from the child,* (and many profane men are worse than Children) *for thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell.* And God says, *In their affliction* *Ezof. 5. 15.*

on they will seek me early. And therefore when Governours neglect their duty, he takes the chastisement into his own hands, *Psal. 89. 32. If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, I will visit their offences with a rod, and their sin with scourges.* And what effect his Visitation has we learn from *Psal. 78. 34. When he slew them they sought him, and turned them early and inquired after God.* As yet God does but shake his rod over the Land, and we hear of nothing but Plots, and the destroying Angel does not execute Gods Judgment against it, but gives this fair warning, and seasonable opportunity for Governours, who are to *do a terror to evil doers, Rom. 13. 3, 4.* to reform these evils by their discipline and correction; but if they do not use their power to restrain men from these licentious provocations, I fear these threatnings are the forerunners of Gods own dreadful execution upon us.

C H A P. VIII

Conventicles the great means to bring in Popery;

I Know it will be replied by some, these are very great Evils, and ought to be remedied in due time; but we cannot do all things at once; we are now finding ways to exclude Popery, and to propose other matters against Protestant Dissenters would be thought a design wholly to hinder all effectual care to prevent our danger from the Papists.

This I confess is often urged to put off all Debates about redressing these crying sins of the Nation; but I see no reason in it, but the quite contrary, for it is the only

only means to keep out Popery, and without it all endeavours will come to nothing. And this is made as evident as the Sun at Noon-day; for what do the Papists labour after, or desire more, but to keep up these Divisions? Who are more for a Toleration than they, though they themselves have no benefit by it in their own persons? Did not Father *Cummin* a known Papist first set afoot these Dissentions in *England*, and afterwards was rewarded at *Rome* for the Service he had done that Court by it? And have they not in all Ages preached in Conventicles, and by their Learning and Cunning kept them up? Does not the first Discoverer of the Plot inform the World upon Oath, that there were Popish Priests sent into *Scotland* to preach amongst the Field Conventicles? And is it not a known thing, that Father *Brown* and the Lord *Forester* (undoubted Papists) were thought great Zealots amongst the *Scottish* Rebels? And 'tis as certain that Father *Whitebread* often preached about in Conventicles in *England*. And while they thus herd together, one can never be suppressed while the other is tolerated. And for a Test with Oaths to distinguish them, that will never do, much less a Test without an Oath; for a Test being but one transient act to secure their Persons and Estates, men of design will readily leap over such an offence, and find an easy Absolution when 'tis for the good of the Cause.

See a Discourse
called Foxes
and Firebrands.

But why do the Papists thus joyn with and uphold these Conventicles? Do they think favourably of their Opinions, or count them better Christians than others? No, nothing less; but by that means they take men off from all settled Principles, and lead them into confusion, and then they find they are easily
baffled

baffled out of their Profession, and wrought upon to come over to them. So that to tolerate Dissenters, and keep up these Divisions, is to do the Papists work for them whilest they are asleep, and with one hand to hold them up, while with the other you go to pull them down.

But if Conventicles be taken away, and all people old and young be instructed in the sober Principles of the sound Religion that is taught in the Church of *England*; these Popish designs of unsettling people will be frustrated, and they must necessarily fall with other Dissenters. So that in the way of Policy as well as Religion, the onely means to keep out Popery is by taking away these open Schisms, and settling the publick Worship of God in beauty and order. And this has been hitherto thought the Wisdom of the Nation, and especially in the times of Queen *Elizabeth*, when that Policy had the blessing of Honour abroad and Peace at home.

But perhaps some may hope by force to keep out Popery, and these Dissenters will joyn with them to do it. But are they stronger than God, and can they withstand his vengeance? If these sins are so heinous as to draw down Gods indignation, he can easily bring to nought all such devices.

And yet further, when men act upon Maxims of Policy contrary to the Rules of Religion, how many ways are they defeated in their aim? Besides, when these Dissenters build upon no settled Principles, their Humours change, their Interests vary; and so may Ministers of State be altered, and the Government put on another face, and then cunning is beyond force, and the stream of the Multitude will be carried another way,

way, and that Torrent which now runs against, may be employed for the Papists. Of this we have an actual instance in the *Jews* dealing with our Saviour; for they that led him in triumph crying, *Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*; quickly changed their Acclamations into, *Crucifie him, Crucifie him*. And there are too many examples of profane ignorant persons, rolling from Presbyterians to Independents, then to Anabaptists, afterward to Quakers, and at length to Papists; and many times when the former Devil is gone out, seven worse enter in.

Therefore you my Lords and Gentlemen have taken another course, you do not trust to human strength, or rely upon worldly policy, but by prayer and fasting humbly fly to and implore the Divine Assistance. You must not then neglect ordinary means and expect Miracles; or hope that God should remove his judgments, till effectual care be taken to reform these crying sins.

I fear Popery, and with an amazing horror dread the spiritual and temporal mischiefs thereof; but unless these sins be reformed, I fear also that is a scourge God has provided for this Nation. Therefore as you have fasted and prayed, so to make them prevail for mercy you must loose the bands of wickedness, *Isa. 58.6*. *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before Gods eyes: cease to do evil, learn to do well. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebell, ye shall be devoured with the sword. Isa. 1.*

CHAP. IX.
Comprehension the certain way to greater Division.

HAVING seen the Causes of our Distractions, we are to inquire after the means of an Happy Union, which all ought to wish and pray for; yet how to expect it I do not see, but by requiring strict Conformity to the Religion of the Church of England, as it is now established; wherein ten thousand Clergymen, and most of the Nobility and Gentry are agreed. For the Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers desire no Union with us, neither will their Principles admit any unless the Church will perfectly go over to them, which can never be done. As for the Presbyterians, they never did nor never will like the Common Prayer, as long as they can be flattered by Enthusiastick Preachers in Conventicles, though they can and often do joyn with it after their careless manner. So that all the Union that can be hoped for by changing of the present Laws of Subscription, Declaration, and the like, will be to bring in forty or fifty of these Enthusiastick Preachers into the Church, and then besides the Schisms without amongst the Fanaticks, they will breed a Division also within the Church, amongst those that will call themselves the Conformable Clergy; for their Enthusiastical way will be onely admired by the Vulgar, and all the sober judicious Divines will be slighted as unprofitable Preachers.

Besides, having stood out twenty years in defiance of all Subscriptions and Declarations, to testify their Approbation of the Common Prayer, and willingness to uphold

uphold the Government in Church and State as it is now established, they will upon the taking away these Obligations, not onely think themselves at liberty, but bound in honour and duty to endeavour the extirpation of both; at best will keep men up and further them in contempt of the publick Prayers and Orders of the Church, and so spoil all serious Devotion.

That neglect and contempt they have brought already upon the publick Prayers and Sacraments, has been no small profanation of Gods Name, and the great ground of all other Profaneness; so that if they gain this point, to be taken into the Church upon their own terms, after they have cast such contempt upon it, they can readily then tell the people what good effect their resolution and clamours have had, and encourage them to persist in their demands; and there is no doubt but they shall be able to take the whole Constitution of the Church away. And if they cannot effect that, yet what a miserable case will it be, when the publick Prayers and Sacraments, Fasts and Feasts, shall be thought by these that will call themselves the Godly Party, the Misery and Grievance of the Nation. Those that daily see and hear how Gods publick Worship is contemned by that Party, cannot but with bleeding hearts and sorrowful groans, lament for the sad condition of the Nation, and fear greater evils yet from that they call *Comprehension*.

But these matters must be left to your Wisdom to consider of, and in all former Ages it was the custom to advise with the Bishops and Clergy in their Synods about settling Religion. Thus did the pious *Roman Emperors* in their times, and our Kings and Parliaments hitherto, and we cannot doubt the like from you, who

by fasting and prayer do seek to God for direction. However this must never be forgotten; when we endeavour after a Union, we must not separate from the whole Church of God, nor hope to keep out Popery by upholding Ignorance and Profaneness. But if ever we expect Gods blessing and an Happy Union, it must be by settling sound Religion and true Piety in the Nation; for while Heresie and Schism, Ignorance and Profaneness, are suffered without controul, we must look for Plots and Conspiracies, Miseries and Confusions, to attend us.

Having therefore shewed by plain matter of fact, from the Confessions of Protestant Churches, and also by the Tradition and Decrees of the Catholick Church, that the Quakers and Anabaptists do teach manifest and condemned Heresie; and that the Papists, Presbyterians, and Independents that keep Conventicles, are undoubted Schismatics; and that Heresie and Schism are heinous offences in the sight of God; the first step to publick Reformation and a Happy Union is, effectually to take away all their Conventicles, and at least make them all rest satisfied with a private Worship in their own Families.

And because under their shelter abundance of ignorant and profane persons have grown up amongst us, at the same time the utmost endeavour must be used to compell all the ignorant sort at least to hear sober Instruction, and by severe penalties to restrain Blasphemy, Swearing, Drunkenness, Uncleaness, and all manner of Vice and Wickedness. And if these things be carefully provided against, as far as is possible by publick Authority, men that are not reformed by such means shall perish for their own sins, but God will accept

cept our humiliation, and hearken unto our prayers, and not onely deliver our Nation from the great danger of Popery, but from all other publick evils and calamities.

But if Quakers and Anabaptists be still permitted to propagate their Heresies, and Presbyterians and Independents to uphold their Schismatical Conventicles, Papiests will lurk among them, Ignorance and Profaneness will more and more increafe, and so God will retain his displeasure, and be more provoked against us; and what can we expect then from an angry God and a sinful People, but Popery, Misery, and Desolation!

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Pref. p. 45.

SINCE the writing of these Papers the Reverend and Learned Dean of *S. Pauls* has published a great and elaborate Book, where he does largely prove and further confirm what I could but briefly mention in this short Inquiry; and in pag. 45, he says, *My judgment being, that a causeless breaking the peace of the Church we live in, is really as great and as dangerous a sin as Murder, and in some respects aggravated beyond it. And herein having the concurrence of the Divines of the greatest reputation both ancient and modern. Would they have me represent that as no sin which I think to be so great a one, or those as not guilty whom in my conscience I thought to be guilty of it? Would they have had me suffered this sin to have lain upon them, and not reproved it? Would they have had me found all the soft and palliating considerations to have lessened their sense of it? No, I had seen too much of this already, and a mighty prejudice done thereby to men otherwise scrupulous and conscientious, that seem to have lost all sense of this sin. And then after he had more seriously weighed and examined all their reasons to justify themselves from this Guilt, he concludes his Book thus; Although I make no such Appeals to the Day of Judgment as others do, yet I cannot but declare to the world, as one that believes a Judgment to come, that upon the most diligent search and careful inquiry into this matter, I cannot find any plea sufficient to justify in point of conscience the present Separation from the Church of England. If there be no sufficient plea to justify the Separation, then these that by their Separation break*
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the peace of our Church, are guilty of a sin as great and dangerous as Murder, in the opinion of this Reverend Person. And thence we may conclude, it will cry aloud for vengeance in the ears of God as Blood doth. But the Learned Dean out of his abundant desire of Union, and Compassion towards Dissenters, does make some Proposals of Accommodation with the soberest of them. The particulars are many, and not to be considered in this short Discourse.

In general therefore I do readily agree with the Learned Doctor, that the use of the Sacraments in a Christian Church ought to be most free from all exceptions, and they ought to be so administred, as rather to invite than discourage scrupulous persons from joyning in them; and therefore I would have nothing made as a Condition of Communion, but what was most clear and undoubted in the practice of the Ancient and Catholick Church, or evidently deduced from the Word of God, and generally held lawful by the greatest part of sober Divines in all Ages. Pag. 82.

But I do not see we can agree to the taking away of the ancient Constitutions and Ceremonies of the Primitive Catholick Church, without great scandal to many sober Christians, and weakning of our cause, and giving great advantage to the Adversaries of the Roman Church, which the Reverend Dean does very excellently set forth pag. 4. of his Preface; *It is of mighty consequence for preventing the return of Popery, that men rightly understand what it is. For when they are as much afraid of an innocent Ceremony, as of real Idolatry, and think they can worship Images, and adore the Host, on the same grounds that they may use the sign of the Cross, or kneel at the Communion, when they are brought to see their* mistake.

mistake in one case, they will suspect themselves deserved in the other also. For they who took that to be Popery which is not, will be apt to think Popery it self is not so bad as it was represented; and so from want of right understanding the differences between us, may be easily carried from one extreme to another. For when they find the undoubted practices of the ancient Church condemned as Popish and Antichristian by their Teachers, they must conclude Popery to be of much greater Antiquity than really it is; and when they can trace it so very near the Apostles times, they will soon believe it settled by the Apostles themselves. For it will be very hard to persuade any considering men, that the Christian Church should degenerate so soon, so unanimously, so universally, as it must do if Episcopal Government, and the use of some significant Ceremonies, were any parts of that Apostacy. Which is a matter so incredible, that those who can believe such a part of Popery could prevail so soon in the Christian Church, may be brought to believe that many others did. So mighty a prejudice do the Principles of our Churches enemies bring upon the Cause of the Reformation. And those who forgo the testimony of Antiquity, as all the Opposers of the Church of England must do, must unavoidably run into insuperable difficulties in dealing with the Papists, which the Principles of our Church do lead us through. For we can justly charge Popery as an unreasonable innovation, when we allow the undoubted Practices and Government of the ancient Church for many ages after Christ.

The use of the Cross and Surplice, and other Orders of the Church, being then of undoubted Antiquity in the Christian Church, to take them away to satisfy our Dissenters, who count them Popish and Superstitious, is to undervalue the Piety of the primitive

Fathers, and will expose us to the just reproaches of the Church of *Rome*, and harden the Dissenters in their former belief. Whereas if the Testimony of Antiquity be of so great moment to uphold the Authority of our Church, we ought rather to be immovable in adhering to ancient Customs, that we may teach the Papists, that 'tis Novelty not Antiquity that we reject in them, and to root out of the minds of the Dissenters that foolish persuasion that significant Ceremonies are superstitious; which can never be done otherwise than by shewing, that they must condemn the Catholick Church in the purest Ages upon the same account, and expose our Religion to the extravagant Fancies of every conceited Humorist, and so drive away many sober men from our Communion. To keep up then the Reverence of Antiquity, and preserve the Honour of the Reformation, we must not take away the use of the Cross and Surplice, and other Orders of our Church, which are of such undoubted Antiquity and universal practice in the Catholick Church.

And as for Toleration, the same Reverend Author does say, pag. 79. *It will be found impossible to root out Popery where Toleration is allowed*; which he does there shew with demonstrative reasons. But because some are apt to think a limited Toleration of some sort of men may be granted without any harm. It is to be considered, First, if Schism be such a grievous crime, as to be as great and dangerous as Murder, how can Toleration be granted to so great a sin, without bringing the guilt of the Bloud of Souls upon our Nation? Secondly, if Schism be a sin of so heinous a nature, what a dangerous thing will it be to lay such a stumbling block before the common people, as to grant

grant a Toleration of those Preachers who are Masters of Insinuation, to seduce the weak and ignorant into such a destructive Separation? Therefore when all is done, the only probable way of an Happy Union, is by setting aside all thoughts of Toleration or Comprehension, upon any other Principles than the Word of God, as it has been interpreted by the Rules and Customs of the Ancient and Catholick Church, and in them all sober Protestants and devout Christians, when they come to understand them will readily agree.

For this was the principle upon which Luther and the Protestants in Germany began the Reformation; witness the *Augustane Confession*, chap. 21. *We do not despise the consent of the Catholick Church, neither is it our intention to bring into the Church any new Opinion unknown to the Holy Church; neither will we patronize any wicked or seditious Opinions which the Catholick Church has condemned.* For we were not led to embrace this Doctrine by any evil concupiscence, but compelled to it by the Authority of the Word of God, and of the ancient Church.

And what these Rules are concerning our present Circumstances, the foregoing Discourse will clearly shew; but will more fully appear in my former Treatise of *The Original of all Plots in Christendom*, wherein I have not onely demonstrated, that the Corruptions of the Church of Rome condemned in the Church of England, have no foundation in the Law and Tradition of the Catholick Church, and many of them are against both; and answered the Objections made by the Author of *The Guide in Controversie*, and other Papists against our Reformation; but also proved that the Doctrine and Government of the Church of England,

as it is now established, are according to the Laws and Tradition of the Ancient and Catholick Church, and approved of by the greatest part of all Christian Churches in all Ages, and even at this very day: to which Treatise I refer the Reader for further satisfaction.

So that when we have a truly Orthodox Religion generally approved of in all Ages established amongst us, and ten thousand Clergymen, many of them men of as great Piety and Learning as ever were in any Age to propagate and uphold it, if Conventicles, which distract the Common People, were effectually taken away, the Body of the Nation would quickly embrace it, and so we should see an Happy Union, and that would procure the blessing of God, and for ever keep out Popery from settling in our Nation.

And since Mr. Coleman and the Lord Stafford did both confess before their death, that their Church did hope to bring in Popery by Toleration and keeping up Conventicles, surely we ought in all reason to conclude the taking them away must be the readiest means to keep it out.

Thus as a Divine and hearty Welwisher to the peace and happiness of my Native Countrey, I have endeavoured to lay open the Causes and Remedies of our Distractions, though with the utmost peril of my Life or Welbeing, whether I respect the Papists or other Dissenters. Had I therefore either consulted my advantage or my safety, I had better have spared my pains, than thus to have provoked their hatred against me; but I thank God I had other Motives to persuade me, than any temporal Concerns of my own, for the Honour of God, the Peace of his Church, and the present and eternal Welfare of so many thousand Souls do de-

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pend upon the right Settlement of Religion, which is the thing I now propose, not out of my own Fancy, or upon any private models and conjectures, but upon that sure immovable foundation of the Ancient and Catholic Church in all ages, which will quiet the minds of all sober people, take away those heats and animosities that are stirred up amongst Christians, and certainly secure our Nation from destruction.

I know this will be thought a vain Assertion by many, but with all serious persons that mind Religion it is an undoubted truth, that the only way to obtain peace and quietness, is by religious performing of our duty to God; and since there are so many pretenders to Religion, that go about to devour and destroy one another, till there be found some way to undeceive these erroneous Pretenders, not only Gods commands, but the peace of Christendom will be little regarded, and consequently we must die exposed to perpetual Wars and Massacres.

Now all these Divisions are kept up upon the opinion of the great Sanctity and Authority of their several Upholders; unless therefore we can urge their Followers with a greater Authority, and more undoubted Argument of Holiness than they lay claim to, we can never hope to undeceive them. And these will most certainly appear in that way which I defend the Church of England, for what Authority can be greater than the Church of God in all ages, in opposition to a particular Church, or a few private persons? Or who can give better evidence of their Holiness than the Holy Catholic Church?

Ed: J. in V. 1. 8.

ERRATA.

Page 10. l. 11. dele in. p. 23. l. 4. c. 27. p. 25. l. 33. after figure add 22.

